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The Generalization of an Old Yogic Attainment in Medieval Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature: Some Notes on *Jātismara*[1]

by Gregory Schopen

I. Introduction: Ideas Concerning Jātismara Found in the Nikāya/ Āgamas

The obtainment of *jātismara*, "the ability to recollect or remember one's former births," is well known in early Buddhist sūtra literature. It occurs as the first of three "sciences" (*vidyā*), the fourth of the five or six "superknowledges" (*abhijñā*), and the eighth of the ten "powers" of a Tathāgata (*tathāgatadaśabala*).

Many years ago the late Professor Demiéville published a richly detailed study of the references to *jātismara* in the *Nikāya/ Āgama* literature, which we might quickly summarize. Referring to *Majjhima* i 22–23, he says, "le Buddha définit les trois *vijjā* telles qu'il les obtint par la discipline spiritulle dans la solitude de la forèt, après avoir atteint les quatre degrés de *jhāna*." He notes that *Majjhima* i 278–80 refers to "un bhikkhu qui, par la méditation solitaire, s'est acquis diverses facultés mentales, dont les dernières énumérées et définies, après les quatre degrés de *jhāna*, sont: le connaissance des existences antérieures, l'oeil divin, la fin des écoulements," that according to *Saṃyukta Āgama* TT. XIII, 3, 83[a-b] "les trois *vidyā* sont attribuées à ceux qui n'ont plus à étudier (*açaikṣa*), c'est-à-dire aux saints du quatrième 'fruit' ou degré, aux arhats." He notes further that at *Saṃyutta* i 196 "ayant atteint l'*arhattvam*, Vaṅgīsa déclare avoir obtenu les trois *vijjā*," that at *Saṃyutta* ii 210 "Kassapa posséda les quatre *jhāna*, et les six *abhiññā*," and that at

Saṃyutta i 191 "sur cinq cents arhats entourant le Buddha, soixante possèdent les trois *vijjā,* soixante les six *abhiññā;* soixante sont délivrés de deux manières; les autres sont délivrés par la sagesse (*paññā*)." Finally, he notes that at *Dīgha* i 13 "la mémoire des existences antérieures au nombre d'une à plusieurs centaines de milliers, résultant d'une état de *samādhi* obtenu par le zèle ardent, l'effort, l'application, la vigilance, l'attention soutenue. . . ," is attributed to non-Buddhist ascetics, and that the independent Chinese translation of the *Brahmajāla-sutta* TT. XII, 10, 91[b] says that "s'il y a un religieux hérétique qui tranche le désir et pratique le *dhyāna,* et si son imagination se trouve en *samādhi,* il peut penser aux choses de vingt kalpa passés."[2]

On the basis of these and similar passages it is quite clear that in the *Nikāya/Āgama* literature *jātismara,* "the ability to recollect or remember one's former births," invariably occurs as only one of a list of faculties, never by itself. It is equally clear that it is invariably connected with the higher stages of meditational technique, that it was, in fact, a concomitant of the most sophisticated forms of yogic attainment. It is also clear that in this literature it is ascribed only to religious virtuosos—notably to *aśaikṣas,* Arhats, and, of course, to the Buddha himself.

These findings are, of course, of interest in themselves. But they also are of interest because references to *jātismara* continue to be found in Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature, and a comparison of the Mahāyāna references with those found in the *Nikāya/Āgama* texts will allow us to see how that movement we now call the Mahāyāna handled a specifically "elitist" idea of a particular ascetic or yogic attainment.

II. The Continuation of the Ideas Found in the Nikāya/Āgamas in Some Mahāyāna Sūtras & A First Indication of Something Different: The Upāliparipṛcchā.

There are a number of references to *jātismara* in Mahāyāna sūtra literature that remain close in character to the references found in the *Nikāya/Āgamas.* This is the case, for example, in the *Pratyutpannabuddhasaṃmukhāvasthitasamādhi-sūtra,* where *jātismara* is said to be obtained—as one of the ten "powers" of a Tathāgata—as the result of abiding in a particular samādhi.[3] It

is also the case in the *Samādhirāja-sūtra*, where the chief interlocutor, Candraprabha, is described as "one who has done his duty under former Jinas, has planted roots of merit, has the recollection of his former births, has inspired speech, etc. (*pūrvajinakṛtādhikāro 'varopitakuśalamūlo jātismaro labdhapratibhāno* . . .)," and where the same Candraprabha is explicitly urged to train for "control of the body" (*kāyasaṃvara*) and "purity of body and conduct" (*pariśuddhakāyasamudācāra*), since the Bodhisattva who has *kāyasaṃvara* and is *pariśuddhakāyasamudācāra* is said to obtain—again as one of the ten "powers" of a Tathāgata—*jātismara*, the faculty by which he recollects his former states of existence (*pūrve nivāsam anusmarati*).[4]

These passages, and a limited number of similar passages, are not so remarkable in themselves. They do, however, indicate that *jātismara* continued to be connected with the religious virtuoso; that it continued to be perceived as a concomitant of meditation (*samādhi*) and yogic discipline at an advanced level; and that it continued to occur primarily in association with the various lists of "powers," "sciences," and " superknowledges." We do not have to read far, however, before we begin to find something quite different, and this difference—as we shall see —tends to occur on something like a massive scale.

When we move to other, and perhaps later Mahāyāna texts, we begin to find *jātismara* occurring in a rather different context. We might look, for example, at the first "section" of the *Vinayaviniścaya-upāliparipṛcchā*. Python has pointed out that the text as we have it "se divise en deux sections" and that "chaque section se suffit à elle-même." The first "section" opens with the Buddha looking over the assembly and asking "qui serait capable (*utsahate*), dans les temps à venir, pour le maintien de la bonne Loi, de se fixer sur ce parfait et complet Éveil . . . et de veiller à faire mûrir les êtres (*sattvaparipāka*) par des moyens très variés (*nānā-upāya*). . . ."[5] In response, a long list of Bodhisattvas declare their "capability" to save beings, each specifying his particular means. Among these Bodhisattvas, one, Maṇibhadra, declares: *bcom ldan 'das bdag ni sngon gyi skye ba rjes su dran par bgyid pas sems can rnams yongs su smin par bgyid par spro lags so:* "O Blessed One, I shall be willing and able to mature beings by causing them to recollect their former births."[6]

In this short passage we begin to sense a fairly fundamental difference. It involves at least two interrelated ideas. First, *jātismara* is here not the result of meditational development on the part of the individual, but something that is effected by an external agent—a Bodhisattva—for the purpose of furthering the religious life of "beings." Second, since the text is here concerned with "beings" it is clear that in this passage *jātismara* is not presented as a faculty attainable only by the religious virtuoso. Instead, it appears as something available in one way or another to all "beings." We find similar indications of this fundamental difference in several passages in the *Suvarṇabhāsottama-sūtra*.

III. The Difference Confirmed: Two Cases from the Suvarṇabhāsottama and Their Parallels

There are four references to *jātismara* in the *Suvarṇabhāsottama*, three of them in Chapter Three. This is of some significance, since Nobel has argued that this chapter "ist der Kern unseres ganzen Goldglanz-Sūtra."[7] Chapter Three appears, in fact, to have been a kind of "confessional formulary" intended for individual recitation, a formulary by which one ritually expressed the intentions of his act, "confessed" or declared his faults, worshipped the Buddhas, and turned over the resulting merit to specific ends—all according to a specific sequence also found elsewhere, notably in the *Bhadracarīpraṇidhāna* (vss. iv ff.) and the *Bodhicaryāvatara* (Chs. II & III).

The individual, reciting the words of the formulary, begins by declaring a series of pious wishes which he hopes the formulary will effect: "By the excellent drum of golden light [i.e., these *deśanāgāthās*, "confessional verses," or the "confessional formulary" that constitutes this chapter] let the woes in the triple-thousand world be suppressed, the woes in the evil states, the woes in the world of Yama. . . . May those beings who dwell in an evil state [*apāyabhūmau*], their limbs alight with blazing fire, hear the sound of the drum. May they take up the refrain: 'homage to the Buddha.' May all beings be mindful of their (former) births during hundreds of births, thousands of millions of births [*jātismarāḥ satva bhavantu sarve / jātiśatā jātisahas-*

rakoṭyaḥ], etc."[8] Further on in the formulary, after the "confession" of faults, the worship of the Buddhas, and the "going for refuge," the individual reciting the formulary is to say: "And by this good act [*kuśalena karmaṇā*], may I ere long become a Buddha. . . . And may I be continually mindful of former births for hundreds of births, thousands of millions of births [*jātismaro nitya bhaveya cāhaṃ / jātiśatā jātisahasrakoṭyaḥ*], etc."[9]

Both these occurrences of *jātismara* in the *Suvarṇabhāsottama* have fairly close parallels elsewhere. In the *Bhadracaripraṇīdhāna*, another "formulary" intended for and used in individual recitation, a formulary by which, again, the individual is to express the intentions of his act, declare his faults, worship the Buddhas, and turn over the resulting merit to specific ends, we find:

> "Whatever is the merit (*śubhaṃ*) accumulated by me from honoring, worshipping, confessing, rejoicing, and beseeching—all that I turn over for enlightenment. //12//
>
> As numerous as are all the living beings in the ten directions, may they always be at ease and free from illness. May their religious purposes (*dhārmiku artho*) be successful and their wishes fulfilled! //15//
>
> And may I, practicing the practice for enlightenment in all rebirths, be possessed of the memory of my former births (*bodhicariṃ ca ahaṃ caramāṇo / bhavi jātismaru sarvagatīṣu*) . . . //16//[10]

Something very like what we see in both the *Suvarṇabhāsottama* and the *Bhadracarīpraṇidhāna* is also found in the tenth chapter of Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatara*. This chapter is, I think, of particular significance because Śāntideva appears here to be speaking as an individual religious man, not as a "professional theologian": he is here dedicating his meritorious act—that is to say, the exposition of the Dharma in the form of the *Bodhicaryāvatara*—in the same way as countless individual donors have done in Buddhist donative inscriptions. He says first in reference to other living beings: "through the power of my meritorious act (*mama kuśalabalena,* X. 10)," "through my meritorious acts (*matkuśalaiḥ,* X. 15)," ". . . may they always have memory of

their former births! (. . . *santu jātismara sadā,* X. 27)." Later, in regard to himself, he says "through this merit of mine (*anena mama puṇyena,* X. 31) . . . may I always obtain recollection of my former births and the going forth (. . . *jātismaratvaṃ pravrajyām ahaṃ ca prāpnuyāṃ sadā,* X. 51)."[11]

In all of these passages, as in the *Upālipariprcchā, jātismara* occurs without the invariable association with lists of other faculties—the ten "powers," the three "sciences," etc.—found in the *Nikāya/Āgama* literature studied by Demiéville; in all these passages *jātismara* occurs without the usually invariable association with the religious virtuoso; and here, again, *jātismara* is no longer associated with the higher forms of meditational development. In both the first occurrence in the *Suvarṇabhāsottama* and in Śāntideva's dedication, *jātismara* is again, as in the *Upālipariprcchā,* both something that is available to all living beings—even those in the hells—and something that can be effected by an external agent. In the *Suvarṇa,* the *Bhadracarī* and in Śāntideva the obtainment of *jātismara* is one of the reasons for which the individual undertakes the act of "confession" and worship, one of the things to which he turns over the resulting merit. It is not through meditational activity, but *kuśalena karmaṇā,* "through a meritorious act," and *anena mama puṇyena,* "through merit," that *jātismara* is to be obtained through "whatever is the merit (*śubhaṃ*) accumulated through honoring, worshipping, confessing, rejoicing, etc." That this—in part at least—came to be the most common conception of *jātismara* in Mahāyāna sūtra literature is further confirmed by yet another passage from the *Suvarṇabhāsottama* and its parallels.

IV. A Passage from the Suvarṇabhāsottama & the Emergence of a Pattern: The Obtainment of Jātismara through Non-meditational Activity Involving Ritual Acts & Sacred Images

The third and final reference to *jātismara* in the third chapter of the *Suvarṇabhāsottama* occurs in the following passage:

> *yo vandate stoṣyati daśabalān sadā ca*
> *prasannaśuddhāmalamānasena*
> *imāya pariṇāmanavarṇitāya*
> *ṣaṣṭiś ca kalpāñ jahate apāyan* //

etebhi ślokebhi ca varṇitebhiḥ
puruṣāḥ striyo brāhmaṇakṣatriyāś ca
yo stoṣyate muni kṛtāñjalibhiḥ sthihitvā
sarvatra jātismaraṇo jātīṣu //

sarvāṅgasarvendriyaśobhitāṅgo
vicitrapuṇyebhi guṇair upetaḥ
narendrarājaiś ca sa pūjitaḥ sadā
etādṛśo bheṣyati tatra tatra //[12]

Although Professor Nobel describes his text here as "sehr unsicher," and although Professor Emmerick has understood the text a little differently than I would, still I think the "parallel" passages that will be cited below indicate that these verses should be translated as follows:

> Who always worships and praises the Daśabalas with a devout, pure, and spotless mind by means of this (formulary) which is praised as (a way of) turning over merit, he avoids (birth in) the hells for sixty kalpas. //
>
> And whoever—men, women, brāhmaṇas, and kṣatriyas—having stood with his hands in the gesture of reverence, praises the Muni by means of these celebrated verses, he has everywhere in his rebirths recollection of his former births; //
>
> He has all his members, all his faculties, and a beautiful body; he is possessed of qualities and manifold merits and is always honored by the kings of men—everywhere he will be such as this. //[13]

This translation, I hope, makes it clear that *jātismara* occurs here, as elsewhere even in the *Suvarṇabhāsottama*, as a stipulated reward or "blessing" (*anuśaṃsa*) for a form of non-meditational religious activity—in this case for "worshipping and praising" the Buddhas by means of the ritualized recitation of this specific formulary—and that its obtainment is open to all: "men, women, brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas." But that this passage is only one example of a definite pattern is clear from a number of other passages elsewhere, where ritualized acts of worship of varying degrees of elaboration are said to result in the same thing. We might look first at a few passages where the ritualized acts of worship are rather simple and uncomplicated.

The first occurrence we might note is in a short passage in

the *Avalokana-sūtra* (*'phags pa spyan ras gzigs shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*, Pek. Vol. 34, 234–1–8),[14] the Sanskrit text of which is preserved at *Mahāvastu* ii 366.5–6. Here, although the larger context concerns the ritual presentation of items to, and the worship of, the stūpas of the Tathāgata, our passage says simply of the individual that "... having done pūjā to the Tathāgata, he becomes one who has recollection of his former births, and he is not carried away by passions, etc. (... *pūjāṃ kṛtvā tathāgate / jātismaraś ca so bhoti na so rāgena hrīyati*, etc.)."

In a passage from the *Saṃghāṭa-sūtra* found at Gilgit we also find: "The Blessed One said: 'Listen Bhaiṣajyasena! The man who at the moment of death, being deprived of life, after having rendered his mind devoutly inclined towards the Tathāgata, has spoken thus: "Homage to the Blessed One, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Completely and Perfectly Awakened One" — he, having done so a single time, O Bhaiṣajyasena, through that root of merit will experience the ease of the gods of the thirty-three for sixty aeons; he will have recollection of the succession of his former births for eighty aeons (*sa tena bhaiṣajyasena kuśalamūlena ṣaṣṭiḥ kalpān trāyastriṃśatāṃ devānāṃ sukham anubhaviṣyati. aśitiḥ kalpāṃ jātyājātismaro bhaviṣyati*).'"[15]

Elsewhere, the ritual activity is specifically said to involve the use of images and is more elaborately described. In another text from Gilgit, the *Tathāgatabimbakārāpaṇa-sūtra*, in reference to which Professor Mette says "die grammatische Konstruktion ist nicht immer durchsichtig," the making, bathing and worshipping of an image of the Buddha is said to result in the obtainment of *jātismara*. Of the doer of such acts it is said: *yaḥ kaścid bhikṣur vā bhikṣunī vā upāsako* [*vā*] *upāsikā vā kṣatryo vā brāhmaṇo vā vaiśyo vā śudro vā evaṃrūpāsu jātiṣu śrutidharo bhavati. jatismaro bhavati*: "A monk or nun or lay man or woman, a kṣatriya or brāhmaṇa or vaiśya or śudra comes to be in all births one who retains what has been heard and remembers his former births."[16]

In the Gilgit text of the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra* it is said that if "friends, relatives, and kinsmen who will go for refuge to the Buddha Bhaiṣajyaguru perform *pūjā* in a certain way (*īdṛśena prayogena pūjāṃ kurvanti*) for the sake of a man who has just died," the result will be that either "his consciousness could return again immediately (and) he then becomes aware of him-

self [i.e. of his 'judgement' before Yama, which has just taken place] as if in a dream; or if on the seventh day or the twenty-first or thirty-fifth or forty-ninth day his consciousness would be reborn again, he would obtain recollection. He himself (in either case) is a direct witness to (the effects of) merit, demerit, and the results of his (past) actions (. . . *tasya vijñānaṃ punar eva pratinivarteta svāpnāntara ivātmānaṃ saṃjānāti; yadi vā saptame divase . . . yadi vā navacatvāriṃśatime divase tasya vijñānaṃ nivarteta, smṛtim upalabhet; so kuśalam akuśalaṃ karmavipākaṃ svayam eva pratyakṣo bhavati*)." The pūjā to be done is then described in some detail: ". . . for seven days and nights the obligation of the *Upoṣadha* possessed of eight parts is to be undertaken, and for the community of monks pūjā and service is to be performed with food and drink, with all the requisites, according to one's abilities; three times in the night, three times in the day worship is to be done (*namasyitavyaṃ*) to the Blessed One Bhaiṣajyaguruvaiḍūryaprabha, the Tathāgata; forty-nine times this sūtra is to be recited ([*an*]*usmārayitavyaṃ*); forty-nine lamps are to be lighted; seven images are to be made; for each image seven lamps are to be set up; each lamp is to be made the size of the wheel of a cart. If on the forty-ninth day the light is not exhausted, forty-nine five-colored flags are to be (left standing (?). All the Mss. are here faulty)."[17]

We find a similar and equally detailed passage in the *Buddhabalādhānaprātihāryavikurvāṇanirdeśa-sūtra* (*'phags pa sangs rgyas kyi stobs bskyed pa'i cho 'phrul rnam par 'phrul ba bstan pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*, Pek. Vol. 34, 193–2–3ff.).[18] Here, it is said that if someone, "for the benefit of those beings who have gone to the Avīci Hell, or have been born in the three unfortunate destinies, or for the sake of releasing friends and relatives, has painted images or images of clay of those Tathāgatas made [the Tathāgatas are listed earlier at 192–5–3, and include Bhaiṣajyaguru, Amitābha, Śikhin, Kāśyapa, etc.]; and having had them made also directs the most excellent thought of compassion towards all living beings, and having undertaken the eight-limbed worthy path (*'phags pa'i lam yan brgyad pa dang par gyur nas*), from the eighth day of the waxing moon until the fifteenth, three times a day and three times a night, does pūjā to those Tathāgatas with flowers, perfumes, etc. . . . and (if), for the sake of freeing those beings, he turns over (the resulting

merit), etc."—if he does all this then, the text says, "the names of those Tathāgatas would be heard by those then born in the Avīci Hell and the unfortunate destinies, and on account of this, and of copying, reading and worshipping this text," they, "having recollected their good and bad acts (i.e., the fruits thereof), afterwards would not perform an evil act. From that they would be freed from those sufferings and would go to a fortunate destiny (. . . *dge ba dang mi dge ba'i las rjes su dran par gyur nas phyis sdig pa'i las byed par mi 'gyur te/ de nas sdug bsngal de dag las yongs su grol bar 'gyur zhing bde 'gror 'gro bar 'gyur ro /*)."

These and similar passages clearly indicate that ritualized worship of a Buddha or Buddhas, frequenty directed towards sacred images or involving the recitation of a specific text, forms a distinct category of non-meditational activity which can be undertaken by all—monks, nuns, lay men and women—and which is stipulated to result in the obtainment of *jātismara*. Two further points, however, are worth noting here.

Hsüan-tsang, in the record of his travels in India, confirms the fact that we have to do here with an element of actual practice, or, rather, that ritual activity in regard to specific Buddha images was in practice actually connected with the potential obtainment of *jātismara*. He says in his account of Bodh-Gaya: "To the north-west of the Bodhi-tree in a *vihāra* is the image of Kāśyapa Buddha. It is noted for its miraculous and sacred qualities. From time to time it emits a glorious light. The old records say, that if a man actuated by sincere faith walks around it seven times, he obtains the power of knowing the place and condition of his (former) births."[19]

The second point to be noted is that the obtainment of *jātismara* is of particular importance for both the *Buddhabalādhānaprātihāryavikurvāṇanirdeśa* and, especially, the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra*. It is, as a matter of fact, clear from both texts that in both cases the one essential reason for undertaking the ritual is to assure that the individual on whose behalf it is undertaken will obtain *jātismara* and—as we shall see—undergo the behavioral transformation that is held to be its inevitable consequence. This, in fact, is specifically stated in the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra*. But since, in regard to the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra*, the passage under discussion constitutes the central piece of the text and, by extension, of the cult of Bhaiṣajyaguru based on it, it would

appear that the primary function of this figure, and the primary purpose of the cult devoted to him was to assure for a given individual the obtainment of *jātismara* and its concomitant behavioral change. This view is of course not in entire agreement with at least one recent view, which wants Bhaiṣajyaguru to be seen as a "Buddha of Healing."[20]

V. A Final Passage from the Suvarṇabhāsottama & the Obtainment of Jātismara Through a Second Kind of Non-meditational Activity: Acts Connected with Sacred Names

If the ritualized worship of Buddhas or Buddha images forms a distinct category of non-meditational acts that are stipulated to result in the obtainment of *jātismara*, it is by no means the only category of such acts. This is obvious, for example, from the fourth and final reference to *jātismara* in the *Suvarṇabhāsottama*. This reference occurs in the last sentence of what is now the ninth chapter of the text, "The Chapter on the Preservation of the Names of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas." This short chapter is, apart from the last line, entirely made up of a series of invocations to a series of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, in the form *namo bhagavato ratnaśikhinas tathāgatasya*, or some slight variation thereof. After this series of invocations, the chapter concludes with the stipulation that "who [that is to say 'anyone who'] preserves, recites, or attends to these names of the Tathāgatas and names of the Bodhisattvas from the *Suvarṇabhāsottama*, the King of the Best Sūtras, he will always have recollection of his former births (*sa nityaṃ jātismaro bhaviṣyati*)."[21]

Similar occurrences where the obtainment of *jātismara* is contingent on some activity connected with a Buddha's name can be seen in the *Kusumasaṃcaya-sūtra* (*'phags pa me tog gi tshogs shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*, Pek. Vol. 37, 78–5–7ff) where it is said that "if a son or daughter of good family hears the name (*mtshan thos na*) of the Tathāgata Pad mo la bzhud pa"—one of the numerous Buddhas mentioned in the text—he, "having passed away, will come to have a beautiful and handsome form, and beings will delight in seeing him . . . and recalling to mind incalculable kalpas, as they really were, so he will fully know

them (*tshe 'phos nas gzugs bzang zhing mdzes pa dang / sems can rnams mthong na dga' ba dang / . . . bskal pa grangs med pa rjes su dran zhing yang dag pa ji lta ba bzhin du rab tu shes so /*)."

In yet another passage from the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra* it is said of those people who refuse to give gifts even when the occasion arises—clearly not religious virtuosos—that they, "having passed away from here, will be reborn in the world of the pretas or among animals. (But) by which of them, when formerly they were men, the name of that Blessed One Bhaiṣajyaguruvaiḍūryaprabha, the Tathāgata, will have been heard, to them now dwelling in the world of Yama, or dwelling among animals, the name of that Tathāgata will (again) come to be present. Immediately, through (that name) being merely recalled, having passed away from there, they will once again be reborn among men, and they will have recollection of their former births (. . . *tatra teṣāṃ yamaloke sthitānāṃ vā tiryagyonau sthitānāṃ vā tasya tathāgatasya nāma āmukhībhaviṣyati saha smaritamātreṇa tataś cyutvā punar api manuṣyaloke upapatsyanti jātismarāś ca bhaviṣyanti*)."[22]

In the closely related *Saptatathāgatapūrvapraṇidhānaviśeṣavistarasūtra* (*'phags pa de bzhin gshegs pa bdun gyi sngon gyi smon lam gyi khyad par rgyas pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*, Pek. Vol. 6, 126–2–5ff.) there are, in addition to the two references to *jātismara* also found in the independent version of the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra*, two further references. The first concerns the name of the Buddha Mya ngan med mchog dpal: "Mañjuśrī, who, hearing the name of the Blessed One Mya ngan med mchog dpal, recites it three times a day and three times a night, dwells in friendliness towards all beings, and worships that Tathāgata, of them all the obstructions due to past acts would be purified, they would be freed from all sorrow and suffering and anxiety and trouble; they would always be free of disease; living a long time, they would be free from all sickness; until the time that they attained awakening they would not undergo any downfall; they would recollect their former births, etc. (. . . *byang chub kyi mthar thug gi bar du log par lhung bar 'gro bar mi 'gyur / skye ba dran bar 'gyur /* etc., 129–5–5ff.)." A very similar passage, in which *jātismara*—among other things—results from "hearing, preserving, and having faith in" the name of the Buddha Chos

bsgrags rgya mtsho'i dbyangs, occurs later in the same text at 130–3–6.

In the *Ratnajāliparipṛcchā-sūtra* (*'phags pa rin chen dra ba can gyis zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*, Pek. Vol. 33), as a part of the opening question of the text, Ratnajāli specifically asks who the Buddhas are through hearing the names of which a "son or daughter of good family" would—again, among other things—come to be possessed of the recollection of his former births (*tshe rabs dran pa dang yang ldan par 'gyur*, 240–2–7f.). Then, at 241–4–3, as one of the results which follow from "hearing" (*thos pa*) and "preserving" (*'dzin pa*) the name of one of the several Buddhas mentioned in the text we find: "Having seen the Illuminator of the World, he obtains immeasurable joy; while practicing the Bodhisattva-practice he will recollect his former existences (. . . *byang chub spyad pa spyod pa na / tshe rabs dag ni dran par 'gyur*)."

Similar passages in which the obtainment of *jātismara* is said to result from "hearing, preserving, and having faith in" the names of one or another Buddha are found once in the *Dvādaśabuddhaka-sūtra* (*'phags pa sangs rgyas bcu gnyis pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*, Pek. Vol. 37, 96–1–5); twice in the *Daśabuddhaka-sūtra* (*sangs rgyas bcu pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*, Pek. Vol. 37, 94–5–4, 5–5); and twelve times in the *Buddhamakuṭa-sūtra* (*'phags pa sangs rgyas kyi dbu rgyan zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*, Pek. Vol. 37, 96–5–7; 97–1–5, 2–6, 3–3, 4–6, 5–2; 98–1–6, 2–1, 3–1, 3–7, 4–6, and 5–4).

VI. The Obtainment of Jātismara Through a Third Kind of Nonmeditational Activity: Acts Connected with Sacred Texts.

It is clear from these Mahāyāna texts that for them, unlike for the *Nikāya/Āgama* texts, *jātismara* was to be obtained not through meditational or yogic attainments, but through merit and merit-making activity, through at least two distinct categories of such activity—the ritualized worship of Buddhas, often directed towards images, and the hearing and preserving of the name of any of a long list of Buddhas—and that it could be obtained by anyone. It is equally clear from other passages that

there were at least two other categories of non-meditational religious activity that could produce the same result for the same category of individuals: acts connected with sacred texts, and acts connected with dhāraṇīs. In regard to the first of these additional categories, it can be noted that the activity concerned is occasionally directed towards the Dharma as a general category rather than to a specific text. This is the case, for example, in a verse from the *Subhāṣitaratnakaraṇḍakakathā* which Professor Zimmermann translates as:

> Wer in diesem Leben beharrlich das Juwel des Dharma niederschreibt, hört, (oder) unablässig darüber nach denkt—oder auch wenn ihm einer hohe Verehrung erweist,—der erlangt stets die Fähigkeit, sich (seiner früheren) Geburten zu erinnern [. . . *jātismaratvaṃ labhate sa nityam* /]."[23]

More typically, however, *jātismara* is said to result from "Copying, preserving or worshipping" a specific text. At *Buddhabalādhānaprātihāryavikurvāṇanirdeśa* (Pek. Vol. 34) 193–5–4ff., for example, it is said that "if someone worships or copies or has copied this discourse on Dharma they will obtain eight great benefits (*yon tan chen po*)," the last of which is "they are reborn in a place in accordance with their desire and they will recollect their former births (*ji ltar 'dod pa'i gnas su skye zhing tshe rabs dran par 'gyur ba ste*)."

At *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-sūtra* 23.8 we find it said that he "who will copy or will have copied this *Aparimitāyuḥ-sūtra*. . . is never reborn in the hells, will never be reborn among animals nor in the world of Yama; in whatsoever state he is reborn, he in every single birth has recollection of his former births (*yatra yatra janmany utpadyate sarvato jātau jātau jātismaro bhavati*)."[24] Virtually the same thing is said at *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra* 278.32[25] of those who have the *Kāraṇḍavyūha* copied. In fact, earlier in the *Kāraṇḍavyūha* we find that in regard to those who "hear, and having heard, copy, preserve and worship the text," "for them the five acts with immediate retribution will be exhausted; after having exhausted (these), they will come to be purified in body and have recollection of their former births (*teṣāṃ ca pañcānantaryāṇi karmāṇi kṣapayanti kṣapayitvā pariśuddhakāyā bhaviṣyanti jātismarāś ca*, 269.19)."

In the *Saṃghāṭa-sūtra* it is said first that he who will wholeheartedly honor (*adhyāśayena namaskariṣyati*) the *Saṃghāṭa-sūtra* "will in births for ninty-five aeons have recollection of his former births (*paṃcanavatikalpāṃ jātau jātismaro bhaviṣyati*)," and later that he who will hear the *Saṃghāṭa-sūtra* "will have recollection of his former births for eighty aeons (*yaṃ* [but Tib: *gang gi*] *saṃghāṭo dharmaparyāyaḥ śrotrāvabhāsam āgamiṣyati so 'śītiḥ kalpāṃ jātismaro* [so no. 36] *bhaviṣyati*)."[26]

In the *Tathāgatānām-buddhakṣetra-guṇokta-dharmaparyāya* (*'phags pa de bzhin gshegs pa rnams kyi sangs rgyas kyi zhing gi yon tan brjod pa'i chos kyi rnam grangs*, Pek. Vol. 28, 262–5–6), as a part of the concluding section of this short text it is said of those who "preserve, retain, read, study, and teach this text to others" that at the moment of their death innumerable Buddhas will appear before them, and that "until they fully awaken to utmost, right, and perfect awakening, they will recollect their former births (*bla ma med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas kyi bar du skye* [so Lhasa, Vol. 50, 255–1–1; Pek.: *sde*] *ba dran par 'gyur ro /*)."

In addition to the texts already cited, at least three of the "shorter" *Prajñāpāramitā* texts also contain references to *jātismara*. In the *Prajñāpāramitā-Vajrapāṇi-sūtra* (*'phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa lag na rdo rje'i mdo*, Pek. Vol. 21, 259–2–4) it is said that one who preserves this Perfection of Wisdom (*su zhig shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa 'di 'dzin par byed na*), will remember his former births (*de skye ba dran par 'gyur ro*). In the *Adhyardhaśatika Prajñāpāramitā* we find it said that "he who carries this discourse on Dharma within himself, or (by whom), after being written in a book, it is circulated, that man becomes an object to be honored. He for many millions of aeons will remember his births (*chos kyi rnams grangs 'di gang gi lus la thogs sam / glegs bam la bris te spyod pa'i gang zag de phyag bya ba'i gnas su 'gyur ro / de bskal pa bye ba mang por skye ba dran par 'gyur ro*).[27] Finally, there are two references to *jātismara* in the somewhat redundant concluding paragraph of the *Āryaprajñāpāramitā nāma aṣṭaśatakā*, both of which appear to have been misunderstood by its translator. The paragraph should probably be translated as follows: "If this Perfection of Wisdom is preserved, the Perfection of Wisdom in One Hundred Thousand Lines will be preserved. Through reciting it continually (*rtag tu*

bzlas brjod bas na), all the obstructions due to one's actions would be purified. After having passed away from here, he would also come to be possessed of the recollection of his former births, attentiveness, and matchless wisdom (*'di nas shi 'phos nas kyang skye ba dran pa / yid gzhungs shing shes rab mtshungs pa med par 'gyur /*). He would preserve without exception the Dharma of all the Tathāgatas of the three periods of time. He would also preserve all the mantras and *vidyās*. Having passed away from here, he would also come to be possessed of the recollection of his former births, attentiveness and great wisdom (*'di nas shi phos nas kyang / skye ba dran pa dang / yid bzhungs shing shes rab chen por 'gyur ro*).[28]

One further point in reference to passages of this kind might also be noted. If these passages make it clear that for the authors or compliers of a considerable number of Mahāyāna sūtras the obtainment of *jātismara* was for some reason held to be of considerable religious significance, and that merit-making activity in regard to the Dharma or one or another specific *dharmaparyāya*—copying, retaining, reciting, etc.—was an important means for its obtainment, it is equally true that the same can be said for some of the most prominent "Doctors of the Church." This at least can be demonstrated for Asaṅga or Maitreyanātha, whichever was the author of the *Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra*, and for Nāgārjuna, or whoever was the author of the *Ratnāvalī*. In the *Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra* it is said: "Who would undertake the preservation of only two verses (of the Dharma), whether in regard to the words or their meaning, he indeed obtains ten kinds of blessings (*yo granthato 'rthato vā gāthā-dvayadhāraṇe prayujyeta / sa hi daśavidham anuśaṃsaṃ. . .*)"; he will have—among other things—"the most elevated joy at the moment of death; a state of rebirth in accordance with his desire; and everywhere the recollection of his former births (. . . *prāmodyaṃ cottamaṃ maraṇakāle / janma ca yathābhikāmaṃ jātismaratāṃ ca sarvatra*)."[29] A passage of similar purport is found in the *Ratnāvalī* (*rgyal po la gtam bya ba rin po che'i phreng ba*, Pek. Vol. 129, 179–3–3 = Ch. III, vs. 296) which, at least from the time of Candrakīrti, has been ascribed to Nāgārjuna. That such passages continued to be relevant to the scholastic tradition can also be surmised from the fact that many centuries later Bu-ston cites both passages with approval.[30]

VII. The Obtainment of Jātismara Through a Fourth Kind of Non-meditational Activity: Acts Connected with Dhāraṇīs.

A fourth and final distinct category of non-meditational activity held to result in the obtainment of *jātismara* consists of acts connected with dhāraṇīs, acts which, to a large degree, are the same as those to be undertaken in regard to the Dharma, or to one or another specific text: reciting, copying, etc. Typical of the passages of this kind is the *Sitātapatra-dhāraṇī* where it is said that "he who, after copying this dhāraṇī, will preserve it, will—for as long as he lives—not be threatened by poison, the sword, floods, etc. . . and he will have recollection of his former births for eighty-four thousand great aeons (. . . *caturaśītīnāṃ mahākalpasahasrāṇi jātismarau bhaviṣyate*)."[31]

Likewise, in the *Nārāyaṇaparipṛcchā*, it is said that "by whom-so-ever this dhāraṇī would be recited three times every day, whether it be by one who is purified or not purified. . . , he, indeed, having exhausted his accumulation of evil, even the five acts with immediate retribution, obtains an accumulation of merit and will be possessed of the recollection of his former births. Everywhere among beings he enjoys extensive wealth, delights in good practices, and is not one of those who falls into error and bad practices (. . . *bsod nams kyi phung po thob cing skye ba drang par 'gyur ro / sems can thams cad kun tu khyab pa'i nor la nge bar longs spyod cing dge ba'i chos rnams la mngon par dga' ste mi dge ba log par ltung ba rnams la ni ma yin no /*)."[32]

In the *Saptabuddhaka-sūtra* (*'phags pa sangs rgyas bdun pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*, Pek. Vol. 37, 90–1–1), a short text in which each of the six *mānuṣaka* Buddhas, through Śākyamuni's power, appears in the sky and gives a *vidyā* (*rig sngags*) or *mantrapada* (*gsang sngags kyi gzhi*) for the "benefit" of all beings, we read in reference to the mantra given by the Buddha Krakucchanda: "If, taking up and preserving (this mantra), one fixes it well in mind, and if in the last period a monk or nun or lay man or woman, having then obtained faith in the three jewels, and bathing, having worshipped the Blessed One with flowers and incense and perfume, would recite this mantra one hundred and eight times, he (or she) would obtain the recollection of his former births for seven births; among devas he (or she) would obtain the exhalted state of a deva, etc. (. . . / *tshe rabs bdun du*

tshe rabs dran par 'gyur ro / lha rnams kyi nang du lha'i che ba nyid thob par 'gyur ro /)."

In addition to dhāraṇī-texts of this kind, an identifiable sub-group of dhāraṇī-sūtras, which I have superficially treated elsewhere,[33] makes frequent reference to the obtainment of *jātismara*. The texts belonging to this sub-group all deal primarily—and with greater or lesser degrees of elaboration—with the practice of copying dhāraṇīs and depositing them in stūpas, frequently in "miniature" stūpas. The *Mchod rten gcig btab na bye ba btab par 'gyur pa'i gzungs* (Pek. Vol. 11, 168–5–7), the Sanskrit title of which appears not to have survived, is characteristic of these texts and their view regarding the obtainment of *jātismara* when it says: "If one would follow thus the method [just described], by making [perhaps better: 'by casting,' as in clay] a (single) caitya, he would make ten million. Everywhere he would obtain recollection of his former births (*cho ga de ltar byas na tsai tya btab pas bye ba btab par 'gyur ro / thams cad du skye ba dran par 'gyur/*). A very similar passage also occurs in the concluding verses of the *Sarvaprajñāntapāramitāsiddhicaitya-dhāraṇī* (*shes pas thams cad mthar phyin par grub pa'i mchod rten zhes bya ba'i gzungs,* Pek. Vol. 11, 117–3–6).

Equally characteristic is a passage from the *Bodhimaṇḍalalakṣālaṃkāra-dhāraṇī* (*byang chub snying po'i rgyan 'bum zhes bya ba'i gzungs,* Lhasa, rgyud Ta 495a), where the Blessed One says "this dhāraṇī causes all acts to succeed . . . causes all evil and obstructions to be exhausted. . . . If someone, after having bathed and put on new, clean garments, were to recite it a hundred and eight times each day, he would see the face of all Tathāgatas; he would live a hundred years; for a long time all sickness would be avoided . . . in all births he would have recollection of his former births (*skye ba thams cad du tshe rabs dran par 'gyur ro*).

Likewise, in the *Samantamukhapraveśaraśmivimaloṣṇīṣaprabhāsasarvatathāgatahṛdayasamayavilokate-dhāraṇī* (*kun nas sgor 'jug pa'i 'od zer gtsug tor dri ma med par snang ba de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi snying po dang dam tshig la rnam par lta ba zhes bya ba'i gzungs,* Pek. Vol. 11, 228–1–7) we find: "thus, in the last time, in the last period, a son or daughter of good family, or a monk or nun, or lay man or woman should call to mind this *vidyā* of the mantra once (*rig sngags kyi rgyal mo 'di dus gcig tu dran par*

bya'o). A stūpa having a relic chamber or a Tathāgata relic chamber is to be circumambulated. Both the wish-fulfilling gems [i.e. the two dhāraṇīs given previously] are also to be called to mind once. Through that he would produce roots of merit under Tathāgatas as numerous as the sands of hundreds of millions of Ganges Rivers; he would be possessed of great merit; the obstructions due to past acts having immediate retribution would also be purified; he would be freed from the unfortunate destinies, from the hells, birth among animals, and the world of Yama . . . in all his births he would have recollection of his former births (*tshe rabs thams cad du tshe rabs dran par 'gyur ro*)."

Similar passages are also found on two other occasions in the *Samantamukhapraveśaraśmivimaloṣṇīṣaprabhāsa* (Pek. Vol. 11, 227–5–4; 228–3–7), and three times in the similar *Raśmivimalavi-śuddhaprabhādhāraṇī* (*'phags pa 'od zer dri ma med pa rnam par dag pa'i 'od ces bya ba'i gzungs*, Pek. Vol. 7, 189–5–1; 190–5–1; 192–4–5).

VIII. The Obtainment of Jātismara as an Element of Sūtra Narratives.

One further kind of passage connected with the obtainment of *jātismara* deserves some mention. In passages of this kind the obtainment of *jātismara* occurs as a narrative element, as an element of various "frame-stories" that enclose the body of a given text, or as a part of an illustrative "story of a past time." Frequently, then, it will occur as a part of the introduction or conclusion of a text. Typical of this kind of passage is the conclusion to the *Ratnajāliparipṛcchā*. There, when the Buddha finishes delivering the "sūtra," the earth—in typical narrative fashion—quakes and, the text says, hundreds of millions of devas, having saluted with their heads the feet of the Blessed One, "recollected many hundreds of millions of their former states (*gnas bye ba khrag khrig 'bum phrag du ma dag rjes su dran no*, Pek. Vol. 33, 244–4–1)"; and, a little later: "a full hundred thousand ten millions of men worshipped the incomparable, excellent Jina; recollecting hundreds of their former states, they saluted with their heads the utmost excellent Muni (*mi ni bye ba 'bum tham pa / rgyal mchog zla med pa la mchod sngon gyi gnas*

brgya rjes dran zhing / thub mchog bla med mgos phyag 'tshal, 244–4–5)."

Equally typical is a passage found at the beginning of the *Ratnaketuparivarta,* yet another text found at Gilgit. Here, it is said that as a result of the light (*prabhā*) shot forth from the Buddha's body, "many billions of millions of hundreds of thousands of those born in the hells, or among animals, or in the world of Yama obtained recollection. After having recollectd the roots of merit they had formerly planted, having made the '*namo buddhāya,*' having passed away from those unfortunate states, they were reborn among devas (*bahūni ca nairayikatairyag-yonikayamalaukikākṣobhyakoṭīśatasahasrāṇi smṛtiṃ pratilabhire pūrvā-varopitakuśala(mūlam) anusmṛtya namo buddhāyeti kṛtvā tebhyo 'pāyeb-hyaś cavitvā deveṣūpapannāḥ*)."[34]

A similar passage also occurs in the long and elaborate *nidāna* of the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā.* Here, when the Buddha enters into a samādhi called "The Lions Play," the earth quakes in six ways and, the text says, "thereupon, at that moment, minute, and second, in this great trichiliocosm the hells, and the animal world, and the world of Yama, all were abolished and became empty, and all the places of untoward rebirth disappeared. And the beings who had deceased in these destinies. . . all, through their joy and rejoicing, were reborn among men, and also among the six kinds of gods (of the realm of sense desire). Thereupon, these men and gods, through the very might of the Lord, recalled their former lives. In their great joy and rejoicing they then approached the Lord, saluted his feet with their heads, raised their folded hands to the Lord and paid homage to him, etc."[35]

Of a somewhat different kind is the reference to *jātismara* that occurs as a part of a "narrative of the past" in the *Samanta-mukhapraveśaraśmivimaloṣṇīṣaprabhāsa.* Here, the Buddha, in recounting the past lives of a particular deva, says that the deva, as a wealthy householder, had had murderous thoughts in regard to a brahmin who recited and taught this dhāraṇī. As soon as these thoughts arose, he became ill, and suffered greatly until he died. He then underwent a long series of rebirths in the hells and among animals, finally being reborn as a blind man. As that blind man he encountered a monk, and that monk "having seen him, being filled with compassion, gave him food.

He also recited this dhāraṇī for him. The blind man heard this dhāraṇī, and having become (as a result) possessed of the recollection of his former lives, remembered the brahmin (*rig sngags kyi rgyal mo 'di yang bsgrags so / dmus longs des gzungs sngags 'di thos pa dang tshe rabs dran par gyur nas bram ze de yang dran te*, Pek. Vol. 11, 227–5–4)." Note that the Chinese text corresponding to the last sentence of this passage has been translated by Chavannes as "lorsque (l'aveugle) eut pu l'entendre, il y fit grande attention et y appliqua sa pensée. Alors dans cette naissance il obtint la compréhension de ses anciennes destinées et il put réfléchir à ce qui était leur origine."[36]

These and similar passages are of interest because they indicate that a number of the ideas concerning the obtainment of *jātismara* that we have seen previously only as doctrinal assertions were sufficiently well-established so that on occasion they could be, and were, used simply as narrative elements. The conclusion of the *Ratnajālipariprcchā*, for example, no longer asserts that hearing a particular text results in the obtainment of *jātismara*; instead, this idea is narratively expressed as a fact: the obtainment of *jātismara* occurs as an accepted and unquestioned part of the series of events that follow after the "congregation" has heard a particular text, just delivered by the Buddha.

IX. The Historical Context of Our Texts and the Ideas They Express: Medieval Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature.

We have looked now at a considerable number of Mahāyāna sūtras, but before we try to summarize what they tell us about ideas concerning the obtainment of *jātismara*, and before we attempt to formulate any conclusions, it might be well to try to place our texts in something like a historical context. We need not, I think, be concerned here with absolute chronology, nor the date of composition. The latter, in fact, is rarely the real question. The important point is not when a text was composed, but when it was read or used or circulated, and the two are not necessarily, or even frequently, the same. What we want to do, then, is attempt to establish the period during which the ideas concerning the obtainment of *jātismara* found in our texts

were actually available, widely circulated, and an established part of the Indian Buddhist context—when, in short, the ideas and the texts that express them had some chance of influencing actual behavior. In this regard, of course, the references to the obtainment of *jātismara* in specifically "authored" works are of some importance: they indicate when some of our ideas had penetrated at least one segment of the Indian Buddhist community.

We may note, then, that if Nāgārjuna was the author of the *Ratnāvalī*, and if he lived in the second half of the second century A.D., then the idea that *jātismara* could be obtained through non-meditational acts directed toward the Dharma—hearing, preserving, etc.—was already accepted at this time, at least among Buddhist scholastics.[37] Again, if the *Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra* is the work of Asaṅga or Maitreyanātha, and if these authors actually lived during the 3rd/4th Century A.D., then we can say that this same idea continued to be current among scholastics for another two centuries.[38] In regard to the sūtra literature, it should be noted that apart from the *Samādhirāja*, the *Pratyutpanna*, and perhaps the *Upālipariprcchā*, probably none of the texts we have cited is so early. Note, too, that the *Samādhirāja* and the *Pratyutpanna* are notable for their continuation of the old ideas concerning the obtainment of *jātismara*, and are therefore quite distinct from the majority of our texts. The bulk of our evidence, in fact, would seem to indicate that the period of widest currency for both our ideas and the texts expressing them was somewhat later.

The passage quoted above from Hsüan-tsang establishes the fact that the idea that *jātismara* could be obtained as a result of activity undertaken in regard to sacred images was current in the 7th century at one of the most popular pilgrimage sites in India. The passages from Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatara* would seem to indicate that related ideas were firmly established and actually acted on by at least one prominent scholastic at roughly the same time.[39] We also know that at least eight of our texts—from which a considerable number of our passages were taken—were all available in the 6th/7th century at Gilgit: the *Bhaiṣajyaguru*, *Buddhabalādhāna*, *Kāraṇḍavyūha*, *Saṃghāṭa*, *Tathāgatabimbakārāpaṇa*, *Ratnaketuparivarta*, *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*, and the *Samādhirāja*, and some of these were available there in

several different manuscripts.[40] We also know that all three of the "shorter" *Prajñāpāramitā* texts that we have cited have been assigned by Professor Conze to a period falling between the 6th and 12th centuries[41]; that two of our texts, the *Aparimitāyur-jñāna* and *Sitātapatra* were—to judge by the number of extant manuscripts—extremely popular in Central Asia, Khotan, and Tun-huang from the 8th century on[42]; that the *Suvarṇabhāsot-tama* too was well known in Central Asia in Sanskrit, Khotanese, and Uigur versions at roughly the same time[43]; and that the *Subhāṣitaratnakaraṇḍakakathā*, though ascribed to Āryaśūra, probably came into existence "between Śāntideva and the eleventh century."[44] Finally, we can note that Indian inscriptions testify to the presence of at least two of our texts in several places beginning from the 10th century and probably somewhat earlier: an extract from the *Bodhimaṇḍalalakṣālaṃkāra-dhāraṇī* occurs—as I will show in some detail in a future paper—in the Cuttack Museum Stone Inscription and on at least two of the hundreds of terracotta tablets found at Nālandā; and one of the dhāraṇīs from the *Samantamukhapraveśaraśmivimaloṣ-ṇīṣaprabhāsa*—again as I will show in the future—is found on "seals" or terracotta tablets or strips of birchbark, at Paharpur, Bodh-Gayā, Nālandā, Gilgit, and Tikse in western Tibet; the *Samantamukhapraveśa* is also "le sūtra de la paroi occidentale de l'inscription de Kiu-yong koan."[45]

It would appear, then, that we are dealing with both ideas and texts that were current and were being used or acted upon during a period extending from the 5th/6th century to the 12th century and even later, even though there are indications that some forms of the ideas may have been older—for example those expressed by Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga/Maitreyanatha. It is in this sense that I would characterize our texts as a whole as typical of "current" medieval Mahāyāna sūtra literature.

Incidentally, it might also be noted that the dates of the Chinese translations of our texts support what we can know from other sources. The *Dvādaśabuddhaka*, for example, was translated first in the 6th/7th century (T.1348), and again in the 8th (T.1349); the *Buddhamakuṭa* was translated in the 11th century (T.438), the *Saptabuddhaka* twice in the 6th (T.1333, 1334) and once in the 10th century; the *Raśmivimalaviśuddhaprabhā* was translated in the 7th century (T.1024); etc.[46]

X. A Summary of the Shifts in Ideas Concerning the Obtainment of Jātismara.

Having established the approximate period during which our texts appear to have circulated, we might summarize what they can tell us. If we move from the passages studied earlier by Demiéville to those we have looked at in what we have called medieval Mahāyāna sūtra literature, we can, I think—putting aside the passages from the *Pratyutpanna* and the *Samādhirāja sūtras*—see that a distinct and fundamental shift has taken place in the latter in regard to *jātismara* and its obtainment. This shift, in fact, involves a number of specific factors.

In the *Nikāya/Āgama* literature studied by Demiéville, *jātismara* usually occurs as only one item in at least three stereotyped lists—the *vidyās, abhijñās, balas*, or, at least, in close association with one or more of the other items in these lists. Moreover, it was attributed almost exclusively to the religious virtuoso, and it appears to have been thought to have been attainable only by means of sophisticated forms of meditational or yogic practice. In the Mahāyāna sūtra literature we have examined, the situation is different on all three counts. Here, *jātismara* has become completely disassociated from the traditional lists of *abhijñās, balas*, etc., and occurs almost always as an independent item, without reference to its earlier associates.[47] Moreover, these texts make it abundantly clear that, far from being restricted to the religious virtuoso, it is here within the reach of virtually everyone: monks, nuns, lay men and women—or simply men or women—brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śudras, and those reborn in the hells or other unfortunate destinies. Perhaps the most significant shift, however, concerns the means by which *jātismara* was thought to be obtainable. First of all, it is clear from a number of texts that the authors or compilers of some Mahāyāna sūtras held that the obtainment of *jātismara* by the individual could be effected by agents external to him—by a Bodhisattva working for the sake of "maturing" beings (*Upālipariprcchā*), by other individuals undertaking specific ritual or merit-making activity on his behalf, etc. (*III* & *IV*). This, of course, marks a major transformation of the "original" concept. But this is not all. Even in regard to the means by which the individual can obtain *jātismara* for himself there has

been a clearly observable shift. Rather than by sophisticated meditational technique, the province in fact of the ascetic few, in Mahāyāna sūtra literature current in the medieval period, *jātismara* was available by means of a variety of non-meditational activities: ritualized acts of worship, often directed towards sacred images (*IV*); activity connected with sacred names—hearing, reciting, etc.(*V*); activity connected with sacred texts—reciting, copying, preserving, worshipping, etc. (*VI*); and activity connected with dhāraṇīs—reciting, copying, preserving, and depositing in stūpas, etc. (*VII*).

It is interesting to note that what we see here happening to the idea of the obtainment of *jātismara* is almost exactly the same sort of thing that happened to the idea of rebirth in Sukhāvatī in virtually the same literature: a specialized attainment associated with a specific group and attainable through limited and specialized means has been transformed into a generalized "benefit" open to all and available through a broad range of basic religious activities.[48] This process—which I would call generalization—appears in fact to be one of the most characteristic elements of that "movement" we now call "the Mahāyāna." It is not only the idea of *jātismara* and the idea of rebirth in Sukhāvatī that have been reshaped by this characteristic process; but a whole series of basic religious concepts have been transformed in exactly the same way: the idea of *avaivartikatā* and the idea of the attainment of Buddhahood itself are just two notable examples that have yet to be systematically studied from this point of view. When applied to ascetic ideas or practices of the religious virtuoso, this process effects what might be described as the "domestication" of radical asceticism or the "democratization" of "elitist" attainments—these are in fact only two aspects of a single phenomenon. In any case, this process always involves the movement away from specialization of ideals and group-specific attainments. It is particularly worth noting that this includes, of course, the movement away from specifically associating ideals or practices with either the monastic community or the lay community. Although the current tendency is to take the kind of texts we have cited as "popular," if we limit ourselves to the material we have collected here we would, for example, have to conclude that the generalization of *jātismara* appeared first among learned monks—Nāgārjuna,

Asaṅga, or Maitreyanātha. Moreover, the passages from Śāntideva clearly indicate that the obtainment of *jātismara* through merit-making activity continued to be a "monastic" ideal, held to and acted upon by learned monks. It should be clear, then, that we are not here dealing with a "lay" or "popular" phenomenon—if by "lay" or "popular" we intend something distinct from "monastic." These and other considerations confirm from yet another point of view that the distinction between "lay" and "monastic" is simply not a useful one—and almost certainly not a real one—in most of Indian Buddhism.[49]

There is one further consideration here. The process of the generalization of group-specific ideals and attainments was undoubtedly related to other changes that occurred in the ongoing process of the development of Indian Buddhism and, I think, our passages can tell us a little more in regard to some of these other changes, as well.

First, we should note that the obtainment of *jātismara*—like rebirth in Sukhāvatī—occurs over and over again in more or less standardized lists of "blessings" or "benefits" stipulated to follow from a wide variety of merit-making activity. In addition to the obtainment of *jātismara* and rebirth in Sukhāvatī, such lists also promise freedom from sickness (*Suvarṇabhāsottama, Saptatathāgatapūrvapraṇidhāna, Bodhimaṇḍalalakṣa*), avoidance of rebirth in the hells or other unfortunate destinies (*Suvarṇabhāsottama, Saptatathāgatapūrvapraṇidhāna, Aparimitāyur-jñāna, Kāraṇḍavyūha, Samantamukhapraveśa*), a favorable rebirth (*Saṃghāṭa, Buddhabalādhāna, Saptabuddhaka*), an auspicious death (*Tathāgatānām-buddhakṣetraguṇokta, Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra*), the "purification" or "exhaustion" of the obstructions due to past karma (*Saptatathāgatapūrvapraṇidhāna, Kāraṇḍavyūha, Nārāyaṇaparipṛcchā, Bodhimaṇḍalalakṣa, Samantamukhapraveśa, Prajñāpāramitā nāma aṣṭaśatakā*), etc., and these lists occur almost everywhere, not just in medieval, but in early Mahāyāna sūtra literature as well. The sheer bulk of the references, the fact that these lists occur everywhere and in all periods, suggests that we are dealing with real and active concerns of both those who wrote these texts—whatever else they might say—and those who listened to them. The connection of the obtainment of *jātismara* with these other concerns—the concern for a favorable rebirth, the concern with the avoidance of rebirth in the

hells, etc.—may not at first sight be self-evident, but a closer look at some of our passages will, I think, indicate that it is intimately related to the basic problem that appears to lie behind all these lists.

XI. The Significance of the Obtainment of Jātismara for the Religious Life of the Individual in Medieval Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature.

Professor Demiéville has already shown that in the literature he surveyed the "value" of *jātismara* was not constant. "Chez les religieux non bouddhistes," for example, it could and did—according to the *Brahmajāla-sutta*—serve as the fundamental basis for the affirmation of "l'éternité du moi et du monde." In the *Mahāvibhāṣā*, on the other hand, ". . . se trouve spécifié," according to Demiéville, "ce que les bouddhistes retirent de la contemplation de leurs existences antérieures: c'est le dégout de l'impermanence." A little further on, however, he notes that "d'après le *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-çāstra* de Nāgārjuna . . . la notion abstraite dégagée par les bouddhistes de la mémoire des existences antérieures est celle de la causalité; le *Mahāvibhāṣā* en fait aussi une des conséquences de cette mémoire. . . ."[50]

Putting aside the conflicting character of the conclusions drawn, it still is clear that all these passages want above all to extract from *jātismara* a "notion abstraite," and that its primary significance here lies in the fact that it functions to confirm and legitimate a given doctrinal position. But, as we shall see, the significance attached to *jātismara* in the Mahāyāna sūtra literature we have examined appears to be of a fundamentally different sort.

There are in our sample several passages in which the effects of *jātismara* are specifically stated. As we have seen, the *Bhaiṣajyagurusūtra* says of the individual on whose behalf the pūjā to Bhaiṣajyaguru has been undertaken that as a result, in the final instance, he would be reborn and—significantly—"he would obtain recollection; he himself is then a direct witness to (the effects of) merit, demerit, and the results of his (past) actions." But the text then immediately adds: "(As a consequence,) even for the sake of his life he does not do an evil

deed. For that reason, by a believing son or daughter of good family pūjā is to be performed to that Tathāgata (. . . *smṛtim upalabhet; so kuśalam akuśalaṃ karmavipākaṃ svayam eva pratyakṣo bhavati. jīvitahetor api pāpaṃ karma na karoti. tasmāc chrāddhena kulaputreṇa vā kuladuhitrā vā tasya tathāgatasya pūjā kartavyāḥ*).[51] Note here that for this text, at least, the significance of the obtainment of *jātismara* is, apparently, behavioral: *jātismara* effects a restructuring of the individual's behavior. Having become "a direct witness to the effects of his acts," he will behave in a certain way: "he will not do evil even for the sake of his life." Note too that the behavioral transformation that takes place appears to be the sole reason for which the pūjā is undertaken. This is at least the case if we take—as it appears we must—the final statement (*tasmāc*, "for that reason") as referring to that which immediately precedes it: *pāpaṃ karma na karoti.*

Elsewhere, the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra* says that those reborn in the hells through greed and stinginess will—through the agency of the Buddha's name—once again be reborn among men, and "they will have recollection of their former births." But here too the text immediately adds: "Terrified by the fear of an unfortunate destiny, no longer seeking for the objects of desire, delighted in the act of giving . . . renouncing all their property, in due order they will present to beggars their head or hands or feet or eyes . . . how much more other accumulations of material goods (*punar api manuṣyaloke upapatsyanti, jātismaraś ca bhaviṣyanti. durgatibhayabhītā na bhūyaḥ kāmaguṇair arthikā*, etc. . .)."[52] Note here that once again the obtainment of *jātismara* effects above all else a radical restructuring of behavior. Note too that the behavioral change effected by *jātismara* is particularly clear in this passage.

Buddhabalādhānaprātihārya (Pek. Vol. 34, 193–2–3) says of the individuals reborn in the hells on whose behalf a pūjā directed towards any of several Buddhas is undertaken that, as a result, "having recollected their good and bad acts (i.e., the fruits thereof), they afterwards (*phyis*) would not perform an evil act. From that they would be freed from those sufferings and would go to a fortunate destiny. Until they fully and completely awaken to utmost, right, and perfect awakening they would conform to this practice (. . . *sangs ma rgyas kyi bar du spyod*

pa 'thun par 'gyur ro)." A little later, the same text repeats the same thing in verse: . . . *dge ba'i gnas su skye ba 'dzin par gyur / sngon gyi las rnams rjes su dran 'gyur zhing / dran nas mkhas pa sdig pa byed mi 'gyur /* (194–2–2): "They would take rebirth in an auspicious place, and they would recollect their past acts. Having remembered that, the wise would not do evil."

In the *Ratnaketuparivarta*, as we have seen, through the "light" emitted by the Buddha countless beings born in the hells and among animals obtained recollection and "after having recollected the roots of merit which they had formerly planted, having made the '*namo buddhāya*,' having passed away from those unfortunate states, they were reborn among devas." In the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*, in a similar passage, the recollection of their past lives on the part of those who had formerly been reborn in the hells and other unfortunate destinies had a similar effect: "Thereupon, these men and gods. . .recalled their former lives. In their great joy and rejoicing they then approached the Lord, saluted his feet with their heads, raised their folded hands to the Lord and paid homage to him, etc."[53]

Finally, in the *Samantamukhapraveśaraśmivimaloṣṇīṣaprabhāsa*, as we have seen, a man who had had murderous thoughts in regard to a brahmin who taught this dhāraṇī sickened and died and had to undergo a long series of rebirths in the hells and among animals. Finally reborn as a blind man, he encountered a monk who out of compassion recited the dhāraṇī for him. "The blind man"—the text says—"heard this dhāraṇī, and having become possessed of the recollection of his former lives, remembered the brahmin." But then it immediately adds: *rjes su sems shing kye ma'o mi bzad pa'i las byas so snyam nas ngo tsha dang / khrel yod par gyur te / 'chi ba'i dus byas pa dang gzungs sngags 'di'i mthus sum bcu rtsa gsum pa'i lha'i nang du skyes te,* etc. (Pek. Vol. 11, 227–5–5): "Reflecting on that, having thought 'Ah! I have done a dreadful thing,' he was ashamed and remorseful, and passing away then, through the power of this dhāraṇī (i.e., what it effected) he was reborn among the devas of the thirty-three, etc."

We can note two things about all these passages. First, *jātismara* is specifically stated to effect in every case a radical alteration in behavior, attitude, or both: having recollected his former births, the individual would not perform an evil deed even

for the sake of his life (*Bhaiṣajyaguru, Buddhabalādhāna*), or else he would undertake religious activity: he would give gifts (*Bhaiṣajyaguru*), perform homage to the Buddha (*Ratnaketu, Pañcaviṃśati*) or acknowledge his wrong doing and feel shame and remorse (*Samantamukhapraveśa*). In every case, the behavior or state of mind that follows the recollection of former births is either implicitly or explicitly stated to be in sharp contrast with the behavior that preceded it. Secondly, the obtainment of *jātismara* in all these texts takes place either in or in reference to a rebirth in the hells or one of the other unfortunate destinies and—importantly—the behavioral or attitudinal alteration effected by *jātismara* effects in turn a change in the individual's position in regard either to his present or his potential future rebirth in such a state. In the *Ratnaketu*, the obtainment of *jātismara* takes place in the hells and its associated behavioral change effects the individual's release and his progression to a more favorable state. Much the same holds for the *Samantamukhapraveśa*, except that there the attitudinal change effected by *jātismara* effects the individual's release from an unfortunate human rebirth. In the *Buddhabalādhāna*, the obtainment of *jātismara* again takes place in the hells, but here its concomitant behavioral change effects, first, the individual's release from the hells and his movement to a better state, and, secondly, a restructuring of his behavior in such a way that he avoids a repetition of his former fate. In both passages from the *Bhaiṣajyaguru* and in the *Pañcaviṃśati*, finally, the obtainment of *jātismara* and the consequent behavioral change take place after the individual has undergone his "judgement" or unfortunate rebirth, but in specific reference to it. They here function, then, primarily as a solution to the problem of the future avoidance of an unfortunate rebirth—direct knowledge of his former unpleasant fate effects a restructuring of the individual's behavior in such a way that he would avoid a repetition of that fate.

It should be clear from all of this that in our texts the significance of the obtainment of *jātismara* appears to have been conceived of primarily in terms of the fact that it could or did effect not—as in the texts studied by Demiéville—the confirmation of a given doctrinal position, but a radical restructuring of behavior and attitude in the individual concerned, and—im-

portantly—the release from, or avoidance of, rebirth in the hells and other unfortunate destinies. It is, indeed, the latter function, above all else, that appears to lie behind and explain the fact that the obtainment of *jātismara* had come to be offered as a generalized reward for religious activity in Mahāyāna sūtra literature.

XII. The Obtainment of Jātismara in a Larger Context: A Suggestion Concerning the Dysfunctionality of the Doctrine of Karma.

We might finish here with one further and final observation of a more general kind. All the passages we have just examined begin with individuals either actually reborn in the hells or other unfortunate destinies, or with individuals who are about to be reborn there. This would seem to indicate that for these texts, at least, the primary concern was the individual reborn in the hells or other unfortunate destinies, and how his release from, or future avoidance of, such a state could be effected. Although the fact has not yet been fully realized, this appears to have been a fundamental problem in much of Mahāyāna sūtra literature. Unless I am very much mistaken, all the "benefits" or "blessings" said to follow from merit-making activity are offered as "solutions" to this same problem: the promise of the avoidance of an unfortunate rebirth certainly, but also the promise of a good rebirth, or rebirth in Sukhāvatī, of the removal of the "obstructions due to karma," of an auspicious death, etc. Lists of these and other related "benefits" occur, as I have already said, almost everywhere and in all periods of Mahāyāna sūtra literature. But the emergence of rebirth in the hells as a serious religious problem and major preoccupation is, in turn, almost certainly connected with yet another factor not yet sufficiently acknowledged.

Many scholars, beginning with Max Weber, have said that theoretically the doctrine of karma as it is presented in early Buddhist literature is one of the most complete and satisfying theodicies in the history of religions. And this may be—*theoretically*—true. What Weber and others after him have not noted, however, is that the doctrine of karma appears—*in fact*—to have created as many problems as it solved. Its acceptance at a

formative stage appears to have laid the foundations for some fundamental and far-reaching problems that only gradually became apparent.[54] If, for example, the "logic" of karma gave a satisfying answer for the visible disparities among men, if it provided a complete solution for the problem of suffering, the very "completeness" of the solution became in its turn a serious problem. That same "solution" *in fact* inadvertently gave an almost equally complete assurance that the average man, the non-virtuoso, whether layman or monk, could, by virtue of his necessarily imperfect daily life, look forward to rebirth in the hells or other unfortunate destinies: *every* act must be paid for and "ni dans le royaume de l'air, ni dans le milieu de la mer, ni si tu t'enfonces dans le creux des montagnes, nulle part tu ne trouves sur la terre un lieu où tu puisses échapper au fruit de tes mauvaises actions."[55] This, of course, is bad enough, but once an individual was born into an unfortunate rebirth, that same "logic" made it very difficult to explain how he could ever escape from it, since such unfortunate rebirths placed the individual in situations that appeared to allow no opportunity for making merit and every opportunity to accumulate further demerit. La Vallée Poussin, referring to *Bodhicaryāvatara* IV. 17–20 "et surtout 22," has noted that "les damnés, par example, sont incapables d'une bonne pensée, et leur péché ne fait que s'accroître par ses propres forces."[56] The basic idea here had already been much more fully expressed in passages like *Majjhima-nikāya* iii 169.9, where the Buddha, using a simile found throughout Buddhist literature, is made to say:

> "Suppose, Monks, that a man were to throw a yoke with one hole into the ocean and it would be blown around in all directions by the wind. Suppose, too, there were a blind turtle who came to the surface once every hundred years. What do you think, Monks? Would that blind turtle ever manage to stick his neck through the hole in that yoke?"
>
> "If at all, O Blessed One, it could happen only once in an extremely long while."
>
> "Sooner or later, Monks, that blind turtle might manage to push his neck through that hole. But, Monks, I say that it is even more difficult than that for a fool who has fallen into an unfortunate birth again to obtain rebirth as a human (. . . *ato dullabhatarāhaṃ bhikkhave manussattaṃ va-*

dāmi sakiṃ vinipātagatena balena). And why is that? Because there (in those unfortunate rebirths) there is no practice of the Dhamma, no right practice, there is no doing of good or making of merit; there, Monks, there is only mutual devouring and preying on the weak (*na h'ettha bhikkhave atthi dhammacariyā samacariyā kusalakiriyā puññakiriyā, aññamaññakhādikā ettha bhikkhave vattati dubbalamārikā*). Even if, Monks, that fool once in an extremely long time might obtain a human rebirth, he would be born into inferior families, outcaste families, families of hunters . . . in such a family that is poverty stricken, without food or drink. . . . Moreover, he would be ill-favored, ugly, dwarfish, sickly, blind . . . and he would be unable to obtain food, or drink, or clothes . . . (as a consequence) he would act wrongly in body, speech, and mind, and having acted wrongly in body, speech, and mind he would be reborn in a bad state, a bad destiny, an unfortunate destiny, a hell (. . . *apāyaṃ duggatiṃ vinipātaṃ nirayaṃ uppajjati*)."[57]

As a piece of homiletics this, of course, would have been forceful and perhaps effective. But as an established "theological" position, it became a doctrinal assertion of the fate inadvertently assured for all believers—whether layman or monk—who were less than perfect. Such considerations appear gradually to have become apparent, and eventually required solutions. The presence of our passages, the modification and adaptation of the concept of *jātismara*, and much else in Mahāyāna sūtra literature, begins to make sense when they are seen as "solutions" to the problems created by the doctrine of karma—as correctives to a "solution" that became in its turn a problem.

NOTES

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2. P. Demiéville, "Sur la mémoire des existences antérieures," *Bulletin de l'école française d'extrême-orient* 27 (1927) 283–98; esp. 283–90. For some inter-

esting remarks from a slightly different perspective see L. de La Vallée Poussin, "Le bouddha et les abhijñās," *Le museon* 44 (1931) 334–42; and for the *abhijñās* as a whole see the rich documentation assembled in Ét. Lamotte, *Le traité de la grande vertu de la sagesse*, t.IV (Louvain: 1976) 1809–1816.

3. P. Maxwell Harrison, *The Tibetan Text of the Pratyutpanna-Buddha-Saṃmukhāvasthita-Samādhi-Sūtra*, Studia Philogica Buddhica, Monograph Series I (Tokyo: 1978) 20k, vs.1; see also 1k; 20k, vs.13; and 20h.

4. N. Dutt, *Gilgit Manuscripts*, Vol. II, Part I (Srinagar: 1941) 10.11; Vol. II, Part III (Calcutta: 1954) 608.14ff.; see also Vol. II, Part I, 16.11 and 151.3.

5. P. Python, *Vinaya-Viniścaya-Upāli-Paripṛcchā, Enquête d'Upāli pour une exégèse de la discipline* (Paris: 1973) 5; 83–84.

6. The Tibetan text is cited from Python, 26.5, but I have altered his transcription so that it conforms to the system proposed in T. Wylie, "A Standard System of Tibetan Transcription," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 22 (1959) 261–67. All my citations from Tibetan will be transliterated according to this system.

7. J. Nobel, *Suvarṇabhāsottamasūtra, Das Goldglanz-Sūtra, ein Sanskrittext des Mahāyāna-Buddhismus* (Leipzig: 1937) xxxivff.

8. R.E. Emmerick, *The Sūtra of Golden Light, Being a Translation of the Suvarṇabhāsottamasūtra*, Sacred Books of the Buddhists, Vol. 27 (London 1970) 9–10. I have supplied the material in brackets. The Skt. text is found at Nobel, 22.3.

9. Emmerick, 14; Nobel, 37.5.

10. For the *Bhadracarīpraṇidhāna*, I have used the text edited in K. Watanabe, *Die Bhadracarī, Eine Probe buddhistisch-religiöser Lyrik, Untersucht und herausgegeben* (Leipzig: 1912).

11. All references are to the edition in V. Bhattacharya, *Bodhicaryāvatara* (Calcutta: 1960).

12. Nobel, 44.3f.

13. This is a translation that might also be suggested by Tibetan I (J. Nobel, *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra, Das Goldglanz-Sūtra, ein Sanskrittext des Mahāyāna-Buddhismus, die tibetischen Übersetzungen mit einem Wörterbuch*, Erster Band (Leiden/Stuttgart: 1944) 34.1), and more definitely by Tibetan III (J. Nobel, *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra, Das Goldglanz-Sūtra, ein Sanskrittext des Mahāyāna-Buddhismus. I-Tsing's chinesischen Version und ihre tibetische Übersetzung* (Leiden: 1958) 72.17f.).

14. Apart from a few exceptions, which will be noted, all my Tibetan material will be cited from *The Tibetan Tripiṭaka (Peking Edition)*, edited by D.T. Suzuki; references will give volume number, then page—"folio"—and line number.

15. R. Vira & L. Chandra, *Gilgit Buddhist Manuscripts (Facsimile Edition)*, Part 8 (New Delhi: 1974) No. 37, fol. 2254.3.

16. A. Mette, "Zwei kleine Fragmente aus Gilgit," *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 7 (1981) 134; 136.29.

17. For the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra* I quote the text established in G. Schopen, *A Sanskrit Text of the Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra from Gilgit: An Annotated Transcription of Manuscript No. 10b*, to be published in Studia Philologica Buddhica,

Monograph Series, by The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, Tokyo, in 1984. Although the text I have established differs considerably, the corresponding passages in Dutt's edition are found at N. Dutt, Gilgit Manuscripts, Vol. I (Srinagar: 1939) 24.12 = my § 17 and 26.1 = my § 18.

18. Although I quote the Tibetan here, the *Buddhabalādhāna*—or at least some important fragments of it—was also found at Gilgit. See most recently G. Schopen, "The Five Leaves of the Buddhabalādhānaprātihāryavikurvāṇanirdeśa-sūtra Found at Gilgit," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 5 (1978) 319–36.

19. S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World* (London: 1884; repr. 1969) ii, 124; T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India* (London: 1904–05; repr. 1973) ii, 124; cf. J.Ph. Vogel, "The Past Buddhas and Kāśyapa in Indian Art and Epigraphy," *Asiatica, Festschrift Friedrich Weller* (Leipzig: 1954) 815, 816.

20. cf. R. Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha* (Boulder: 1979).

21. Nobel, 120.8.

22. Dutt, *Gilgit Manuscripts*, Vol. I, 8.10, but cf., n. 17. Dutt 8.10 = my § 7.

23. H. Zimmermann, *Die Subhāṣita-ratna-karaṇḍaka-kathā (dem Āryaśūra zugeschriebin) und ihre tibetische Übersetzung*, Freiburger Beiträge zur Indologie, Bd. 8 (Wiesbaden: 1975) 163.

24. M. Walleser, *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtram, nach einer nepalesischen Sanskrit-Handschrift mit der tibetischen und chinesischen Version* (Heidelberg: 1916).

25. For the *Kāraṇḍavyūha* I have used the text in P.L. Vaidya, *Mahāyāna-Sūtra-Saṃgraha*, Part I (Darbhanga: 1961), although a fragmentary manuscript of it too was found at Gilgit (cf. O. von Hinüber, *Die Erforschung der Gilgit-Handschriften (Funde buddhistischer Sanskrit-Handschriften*, I) (Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. 1: Philo-Hist. Kl. Jg. 1979, Nr. 12) 343.

26. Vira & Chandra, Part 8, fol.2122.1; and fol.2158.7, no.36 fol.1991.5.

27. Text cited from Toganoo's edition reprinted in Y. Hatta, *Index to the Ārya-Prajñāpāramitā-Naya-Śata-Pañcāśatika* (Kyoto: 1971) 225.10.

28. The Tibetan text is cited from E. Conze, "Tantric Prajñāpāramitā Texts," *Sino-Indian Studies* 5, II (1956) 122; for his translation, see E. Conze, *The Shorter Prajñāpāramitā Texts* (London: 1973) 198.

29. S. Lévi, *Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra, Exposé de la doctrine du grand véhicule selon le système Yogācāra*, t.I (Paris: 1907) XII.21–23.

30. E. Obermiller, *History of Buddhism (Chos-hbyung) by Bu-ston*, Part I (Heidelberg: 1931) 12.

31. Text from H.W. Bailey, *Indo-Scythian Studies, Being Khotanese Texts Volume V* (Cambridge: 1963) 375.166; see also 366.132 for the same passage in a second manuscript of the same text.

32. Text from A.C. Banerjee, *Nārāyaṇaparipṛcchā, Sanskrit and Tibetan Texts* (Calcutta: 1941) 15.4 (the Skt. for this passage is missing from Banerjee's Ms.).

This passage from the *Nārāyaṇaparipṛcchā* is followed immediately by another passage that also refers to *jātismara*. Although the Skt. text for this

second passage is preserved, it unfortunately appears in part to be corrupt, and Banerjee's handling of the Ms. material makes it difficult to suggest a satisfying emendation. He gives the passage in the following form (I have inserted in brackets the material I have taken from his notes):

yaś ca punar nārāyaṇa imaṃ [yogyaṃ] [reconstructed from Tib. *rung*] *dhāraṇīṃ dhārayamāṇaḥ kulaputro vā kuladuhitā vā bhikṣur vā bhikṣuṇī vā upāsako vā upāsikā vā rājā vā rājaputro vā brāhmaṇo vā mṛtaḥ kālagataḥ saddharmabhāṇako vā dagdho bhasmībhūto* [Ms. *'smi ca*] *vā punaś ca puruṣo vā strī vā kācit* [Ms. *cchāra* (?), Banerjee emends on the basis of Tib. *la la zhig*] *spṛśet sa eva niyato* [Ms. *niyato*(?)] *jātismaro bhaviṣyati* (4.18-5.2)

The Tibetan translation has:

sred med kyi bu / yang gang zhig rigs kyi bu 'am rigs kyi bu mo 'am dge slong ngam dge slong ma 'am dge bsnyen nam dge bsnyen ma 'am rgyal po 'am rgyal po'i bu 'am bram ze 'ang rung gzungs 'di 'dzin par byed pa 'chi ba'i dus la bab pa na dam pa'i chos kyi snang ba can du 'gyur zhing tshig pa 'am thal bar gyur pa la 'ang skyes pa 'am bud med gang la la zhig gis reg par bgyid pa de nyed nges par skyes ba dran par 'gyur ro /

Although this Tib. translation seems to imply a Skt. text somewhat different from that found in Banerjee's Ms. and is therefore not altogether helpful for solving the problems in the latter, still it supports a certain interpretation of at least a part of the Skt. text. *If* we tentatively accept Banerjee's *bhasmībhūto* but reject the *vā* following it; *if* in addition we reject the *kācit* which Banerjee read on the basis of Tib. and take *cchara*(?) as possibly standing for *sāra* in the sense of "core," that which remains after cremation, or as a mistake for *śarīra*, *then* we can tentatively translate the Skt. as:

"And if again, Nārāyaṇa, a son or daughter of good family, or a monk or nun, or a lay man or woman, or a king or a prince or a brahmin wearing this dhāraṇī were dead, deceased; or if a reciter of the Good Law had been cremated, reduced to ashes; and if again a man or woman were to touch the remains, he or she assuredly will come to be possessed of the recollection of his former births."

Lest the idea here seem altogether strange, we might cite another instance of the transmission of the benefits of a dhāraṇī through contact with remains of the dead. In this instance, however, which comes from the *Samantamukhapraveśaraśmivimaloṣṇīṣaprabhāsasarvatathāgatahṛdayasamayavilokatedhāraṇī* (Pe. Vol. 11, 228—1), the transmission is in the opposite direction: *bye ma la lan nyi shu rtsa gcig bzlas brjod byas te dur khrod du gtor na / gang gi rus pa la bog pa de dag sems can dmyal ba gang dang gang du skyes ba de dang de nas yongs su thar te mtho ris su skye bar 'gyur ro / gang dag mtho ris su skyes ba de dag gi lus la me tog gi char 'bab par 'gyur ro /*: "If, reciting [this dhāraṇī] twenty-one times over some sand, he throws it into the burning grounds, on whom-so-ever's bones it would fall, they, in whatever hell they had been reborn, being released from that, would be reborn in heaven. Those who had (already) been reborn in heaven, on their bodies a rain of flowers would fall."

33. G. Schopen, "The Text on the 'Dhāraṇī Stones from Abhayagiriya': A Minor Contribution to the Study of Mahāyāna Literature in Ceylon," *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 5,1 (1982) 100–108.

34. Y. Kurumiya, *Ratnaketuparivarta, Sanskrit Text* (Kyoto: 1978) 18.14.

35. E. Conze, *The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom with the Divisions of the Abhisamayālaṅkara* (Berkeley: 1975) 40.

36. E. Chavannes, "Le sūtra de la paroi occidentale de l'inscription de Kiu-yong koan," *Mélanges Charles de Harlez* (Leyde: 1896) 74.

37. On the authorship of the *Ratnāvalī* see J.W. de Jong, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 20 (1978) 136–37.

38. On the question of the authorship of the *Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra* see J. May, "La philosophie bouddhique idéaliste," *Asiatische Studien/Études asiatiques* 25 (1971) 285ff.

39. For a discussion of the datés of Śāntideva see J.W. de Jong, "La légende de Śāntideva," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 16 (1975) 161–82, esp. 179ff. (reprinted in J.W. de Jong, *Buddhist Studies*, ed. G. Schopen (Berkeley: 1979) 119–40).

40. On the Gilgit collection as a whole see the work by O. von Hinüber cited above in n.25 and, by the same author, "Die Erforschung der Gilgit-Handschriften. Nachtrag," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 130.2 (1980) *25–26* (Wissenschaftliche Nachrichten). Although most scholars today probably accept a 6th/7th Century date for the collection, at least one has argued that at least a part of the collection—on paleographical grounds—should be dated earlier, perhaps as early as the beginning of the 5th Century A.D. (see N.P. Chakravarti, "The Gilgit Text of the Vajracchedikā", in G. Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts*, Part I (Roma: 1956) 177ff.)

41. Conze, "Tantric Prajñāpāramitā Texts," 100ff.

42. For the *Aparimitāyur-jñāna* see R.E. Emmerick, *A Guide to the Literature of Khotan* (Tokyo:1979) 17, no. 3; D. Sinor, "A Középázsiai török buddhizmusról," *Körösi Csoma-Archivum* 1.5 (1939) 372, no. 9; A. Fujieda, "The Tunhuang Manuscripts, A General Description (Part I)," *Zinbun* 9 (1966) 5,7,13,31,32; (Part II), *Zinbun* 10 (1969) 36,38,39; J. Ishihama & S. Yoshimura, "Various Manuscripts of the Aparimitāyuḥ-Sūtra," *Monumenta Serindica*, Vol. I (Kyoto: 1958) 48–50.—On the *Sitātapatra* see S. Sengupta, "A Note on Usnisa-sitatapatra-pratyamgira . . . Dharani," *Buddhist Studies, Journal of the Department of Buddhist Studies, University of Delhi*, March 1974, pp. 68–75.

43. Emmerick, *A Guide to the Literature of Khotan*.

44. J.W. de Jong, review of Zimmerman, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 18 (1976) 318 (repr. in *Buddhist Studies*, 321).

45. On both these texts in inscriptions see the paper cited above in n.33, and G. Schopen, "The Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa and Vimaloṣṇīṣa Dhāraṇīs in Indian Inscriptions: Two Sources for the Practice of Buddhism in Medieval India," in preparation. In regard to Gilgit it might be noted that if my identification of the "Schutzformel" written on birchbark strips and published by Professor von Hinüber is correct, if it is in fact the 2nd dhāraṇī from the *Samantamukhapraveśa*, then it would seem that this text too—although it has not yet been found among the known Mss.—was also known at Gilgit. This identification might also suggest some minor corrections to Professor von Hinüber's reading of the "formula" (see O. von Hinüber, "Namen in Schutzzaubern aus Gilgit," *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 7 (1981) 166–67.

46. I have taken all these dates from P. Demiéville, H. Durt et A. Seidel, *Répertoire du canon bouddhique sino-japonais, édition de Taishō, Fascicule annexe du Hōbōgirin*, deuxième édition révisée et augmentée (Tokyo: 1978)

47. There are two possible exceptions to this. In the *Daśabuddhakasūtra* (Pek. Vol. 37, 94–5–1) it is said . . . *de'i mtshan bzung na . . . tshe rabs dran par 'gyur ro / mngon par shes pa lnga dang sangs rgyas kyi chos ma 'dres pa bco brgyad 'thob par 'gyur ro /*: ". . . if one would preserve his name [i.e. that of the 9th Buddha mentioned in the text] . . . he would recollect his former births. He would obtain the five superknowledges and the eighteen characteristics peculiar to a Buddha." In the *Raśmivimalaviśuddhaprabhā* (Pek. Vol. 7, 190–5–1), as a part of a list of "benefits" following from making a stūpa in conjunction with reciting a dhāraṇī, it is said that the individual will be reborn in his next life in a pure Buddha field and that . . . *der yang tshe lo bye ba khrag khrig brgya stong thub par 'gyur te sngon gyi gnas rjes su dran pa dang / lha'i mig dang lha'i rna ba rnam par dag pa thob cing pha rol gyi sems shes pa dang 'chi ba 'pho ba dang skye ba shes 'thob bo / lus las tsan dan gyi dr 'i ngad 'byung zhing*, etc. In the first of these two passages, note that while it is true that *jātismara* occurs in a list the next item of which is the five *abhijñās*, the way in which the list is drawn up appears to indicate that whoever compiled it had completely forgotten that *jātismara* was supposed to be the fourth of the five *abhijñās*. It appears that for him *jātismara* and the five *abhijñās* were two completely independent things. In the second passage, in addition to the somewhat unusual order, note that *jātismara* is obtained in association with the other four *abhijñās* not in this world but in a "pure Buddha field," and that this reference is therefore closest to the reference to *jātismara* already pointed out by Demiéville in the *Sukhāvatīvyūha* (Demiéville, "Sur la mémoire des existences antérieures," 296n.3).

48. See G. Schopen, "Sukhāvatī as a Generalized Religious Goal in Sanskrit Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 19 (1977) 177–210. Of the texts I have cited in the present paper which offer the obtainment of *jātismara* as a generalized "benefit" following from merit-making activity, note that the following also offer rebirth in *Sukhāvatī* on the same terms: the *Bhadracarīpraṇidhāna*, *Bhaiṣajyaguru*, *Aparimitāyur-jñāna*, and the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*, all of which are discussed in *Indo-Iranian Journal* 19 (1977), plus the following texts in which rebirth in Sukhāvatī is offered as a generalized "benefit" but which are not mentioned there: *Daśabuddhaka* (Pek. Vol. 37, 94–3–6); *Saptabuddhaka* (Pek. Vol. 37, 90–4–4); *Sitātapatra* (Bailey) 367.141, 375.177; *Bodhimaṇḍalalakṣa* (Lhasa, rgyud Ta)495a; *Raśmivimalaviśuddhaprabhā* (Pek. Vol. 7, 192–2–4); *Samantamukhapraveśa* (Pek. Vol. 11, 227–2–7; 228–3–6, 4–4, 5–7).

49. For a discussion of the layman/monk distinction based on epigraphical sources see G. Schopen, "Two Problems in the History of Indian Buddhism: The Layman/Monk Distinction and the Doctrines of the Transference of Merit," *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 10 (1983) in the press.

50. Demiéville, "Sur la mémoire des existences antérieures," 287; 294, 295.

51. Dutt, *Gilgit Manuscripts*, Vol. I, 25.2 = my § 17.

52. Dutt, *Gilgit Manuscripts*, Vol. I, 9.8 = my § 7.

53. See *VII* above.

54. I am here not talking about the well known problems of harmonizing the doctrine of karma and the doctrine of *anātman*. These were essentially problems of Buddhist scholastics, which probably had little if any effect on the actual "world" of the average practicing Buddhist (cf. L. de La Vallée Poussin, "Dogmatique bouddhique. La négation de l'âme et la doctrine de l'acte," *Journal asiatique* (1902) 237–306). The problem or problems I am concerned with here are of a fundamentally different sort.

55. *Dhammapada* vs. 127 as translated in Ét. Lamotte, *Histoire du bouddhisme indien* (Louvain: 1958) 37.

56. L. de La Vallée Poussin, "Dogmatique bouddhique II. Nouvelles recherches sur la doctrine de l'acte," *Journal asiatique* (1903) 371n.

57. I give here in part a free and somewhat condensed version of this frequently translated passage; cf. I.B. Horner, *The Middle Length Sayings (Majjhima-Nikāya)* Vol. III (London: 1959) 214–15. For the simile of the yoke and the turtle see the references in de Jong, *Buddhist Studies*, 316; 320).